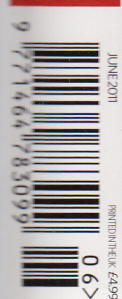


# R★CLASSIC★K

"HAVE I TRIED PSYCHOTHERAPY?  
I DID VERY LITTLE ELSE FOR 40 YEARS!"

ROGER WATERS p40

Future  
MEDIA WITH PASSION



JUNE 2011

WITCHAMILL & 4599



## Features

### 40 Roger Waters

Thirty years after Pink Floyd's original staging of *The Wall*, its creator is back with a new, updated and expanded production. And it only cost \$15 million.

### 56 Rival Sons

Are these snappy dressers the unlikely saviours of American rock?

### 60 Johnny Thunders

He was the New York Doll-turned-junkie poster boy who had it all and threw it away. Friends, lovers, bandmates and people who knew him best reveal the man behind the myth.

### 66 Rainbow

Just when Ritchie Blackmore's post-Purple outfit were *Rising*, and peaking as probably the greatest rock'n'roll band on the planet, the inevitable tensions began to show.

### 72 Dave Grohl

When the Foo Fighters mainman isn't playing with Them Crooked Vultures and hanging out with Lemmy, he's making the heaviest album of his career. And talking to *Classic Rock*.

### 76 The Alarm

U2 were fans, Dylan was a mate, the singles chart was a familiar friend... And then: "I saw a piece of paper with the word 'cancer' on it. The doctor said: 'You've got a 50/50 chance of surviving.'" Mike Peters on a life less ordinary.

### 80 Greg Dulli

The cult Americana singer-songwriter - and survivor - is writing some of his most honest and evocative material.

### 82 The New Wave Of British Heavy Metal

Is there really life after NWOBHM? *Classic Rock* tracks down Thunderstick, Gerry Laffy, Pete Gill and a handful of other British rock heroes of yesteryear.

### 88 Steve Earle

Singer. Songwriter. Guitarist. Actor. Novelist. Playwright. Activist. Grammy winner. Harry Potter addict (yes, really).



# 40 Roger Waters

Rebuilding The Wall: the  
Greatest Show On Earth.

COVER STORY

Build 'em up, knock 'em down:  
Is Roger Waters's tour the  
final brick in *The Wall*?





\$15m

424



# million.

HOW **ROGER WATERS** REBUILT *THE WALL*

# bricks.

30 YEARS ON AND TURNED IT INTO

# 56 dates.

THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH.

# One man.

Words: **Hugh Fielder**

DANNY CLINCH/GETTY IMAGES

## IS THERE ANYBODY OUT THERE?

Yes. Hundreds of people, actually, milling around outside the Atlantico Pavilion in Lisbon. They're here for the second European date of the biggest and most expensively staged tour of the year: Roger Waters's revival of *The Wall*, more than three decades after its original staging.

Tonight's show is a sell-out, like most of the 50-plus dates on this leg. By the time tour finishes, around a million people will have watched an 11-metre high, 70-metre wide wall being built between them and the man they've come to see. The band on stage will continue to play a 32-year-old album behind that wall until the end of the show, when the whole edifice will come tumbling down. A similar number of people have already seen the show in North America last autumn. Now, as then, no one is likely to complain about not being able to see the band during the show.

*The Wall* is a legend in the annals of live rock music, partly because it was such an alien concept and partly because Pink Floyd, the band led by Waters at that time, performed the show just 29 times, in four cities – LA, New York, London and Dusseldorf – in 1980 and 1981. It would be the last time Waters and Pink Floyd played together until they reunited for Live 8 in 2005.

Pink Floyd never showed any interest in performing *The Wall* after Waters departed and guitarist David Gilmour took the helm. Waters embarked on a solo career, although he was tempted into staging a grandiose *Wall* in 1990 in Berlin with an all-star cast to celebrate the fall of another even more famous wall.

His career stalled soon afterwards, although it was revived at the turn of the millennium with the *In The Flesh* world tour and has prospered since. But there was no indication that he was planning to revisit *The Wall*. As he says: "It was incredibly difficult to stage back in 1980 and we lost a lot of money doing it."

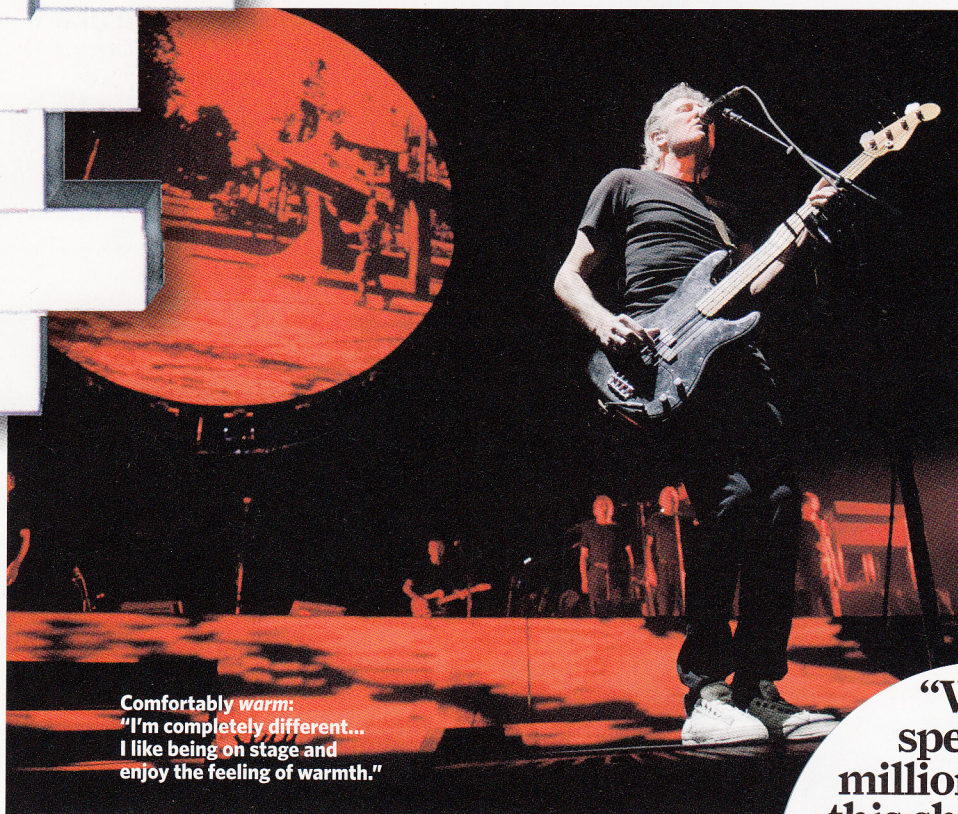
Then in April last year Waters announced that he was taking *The Wall* on a world tour.

"Well, I did a tour a couple of years back where I did the whole of *Dark Side Of The Moon*," he explains now. "I had been reluctant to take that piece and re-do it. But it worked well. So when I'd recovered from that I thought maybe I had one more in me. My fiancé said that maybe I should do *The Wall*. I said I couldn't. But it wouldn't go away..."

**M**ark Fisher is mildly exasperated. As the stage designer for both the original *The Wall* tour and this 21st-century update, he's heard all the talk of this new show being the sort of thing they could only dream about 30 years ago.

"It's the same bloody wall," he says with a sigh. "Identical. It's frustrating that people think we're doing something that we could not have done in 1980. The engineering behind the building of the wall – the platforms that the men go up and down on to build the wall, the stabilising masts that go up inside the wall to stop it falling over, and the cardboard bricks themselves – are exactly what I designed back in 1980. The only things that are different are connected with how they are controlled. [In 1980] I sat behind the stage with a bank of switches and moved things up and down. Now we have a computer that does the same thing and a man that watches the computer." ➤





Comfortably warm:  
"I'm completely different...  
I like being on stage and  
enjoy the feeling of warmth."

**"We've  
spent \$15  
million putting  
this show on the  
road. Back in 1980  
we spent about  
\$2 million  
at most."**

Mark Fisher, stage  
designer

As a young architecture student, the original *The Wall* production was Fisher's first major design for a rock show. It was the springboard for a career as a self-styled 'event architect' that has seen him become the in-house stage designer on globe-trotting stadium tours by The Rolling Stones and U2, as well as the opening and closing ceremonies at the Beijing Olympics.

So when Waters started thinking of bringing back *The Wall*, Fisher was his first call. "He told me that it would be much easier to do now than then," says Waters. "Technology had come a long way, and people spend a lot more money on tickets than they used to. He thought I could make the figures work, and maybe even come out of it with some gravy. So I thought, okay, let's do it."

Inside the empty arena the actual wall is still an imposing site – even part-built and unlit – jutting out from the upper tiers of each side and tapering down to the stage. It's not just the height, it's also the width: three-quarters the length of a football pitch. Behind and beneath the wall is a scaffolding warren jammed with motors, hydraulic pumps, lifts, platforms and

passageways. Each piece has a diagram stuck on to show exactly where it fits. And then there are the piles of 'bricks' that arrived flat-packed and are assembled and waiting to be laid. (They tried making them out of plastic, but plastic cracks. So it was back to cardboard and white paint.)

The projectors have been focused, the band have sound-checked. Now there's just an echoing, quiet calm. Everything that needed to be checked has been checked. At what used to be known as the sound desk and is now the production control centre, a couple of guys are tapping on keyboards while rows of screens flicker on standby...

The calm is broken when the venue's doors open and groups of people run to the front of the stage and take up prime position. Unlike the American shows, the European shows are free-standing on the arena floor wherever possible. This means there's no room for the dishevelled tramp who would wander up and down the aisles at American concerts, pushing a supermarket trolley and brandishing a placard saying 'No thought control', before being ushered out by a burly security guy just before the show began.

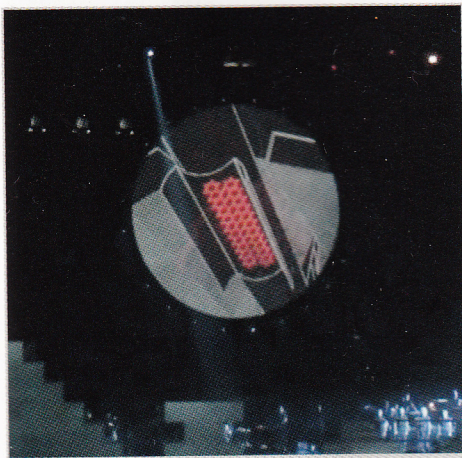
In the centre of the floor a skeleton staff are minding the control centre. Banks of screens flicker on standby, waiting to be activated. The stage is similarly quiet; there are no roadies making last-minute equipment checks or tapping microphones. Everything that needed to be checked was done earlier. The only untoward item is a tailor's dummy placed centre stage. The PA is playing a succession of Bob Dylan songs. This is the calm before the choreographed multi-media barrage is unleashed.

**T**he *Wall* famously started with a gob. During the last show of Pink Floyd's *Animals* tour at Montreal's Olympic Stadium, Waters spat at a fan who was yelling drunkenly for the band to



The new inflatables:  
"I was never satisfied  
with the originals,"  
says Gerald Scarfe





## STAR WARS

Roger Waters vs The Anti-Defamation League. Gentlemen, take your corners.

The updated version of *The Wall* production has come under fire from Jewish activists. The new animation for *Goodbye Blue Sky* depicts bombers flying overhead, dropping symbols that include a crucifix, a Star of David, a crescent, a dollar sign, a pound sign, a Shell logo and a Mercedes-Benz logo.

Soon after the US leg of the tour began, the Anti-Defamation League, an organisation set up to fight anti-Semitism, called the juxtaposition of the Star of David and the dollar sign "outrageous". They claimed that "the meaning could easily be misinterpreted as a comment about Jews and money".

Waters replied via his website that there was no hidden meaning behind the order of the symbols. "The point I am making," he said, "is that the bombardment we are subjected to by conflicting religious, political and economic ideologies often encourages us to turn against one another".

The order of the symbols was subsequently changed, and the Star of David is now followed by a Mercedes-Benz logo.

There is no word yet on whether the Iranian authorities have been able to make out the word 'Zion' in any of the graphics projected onto the wall.

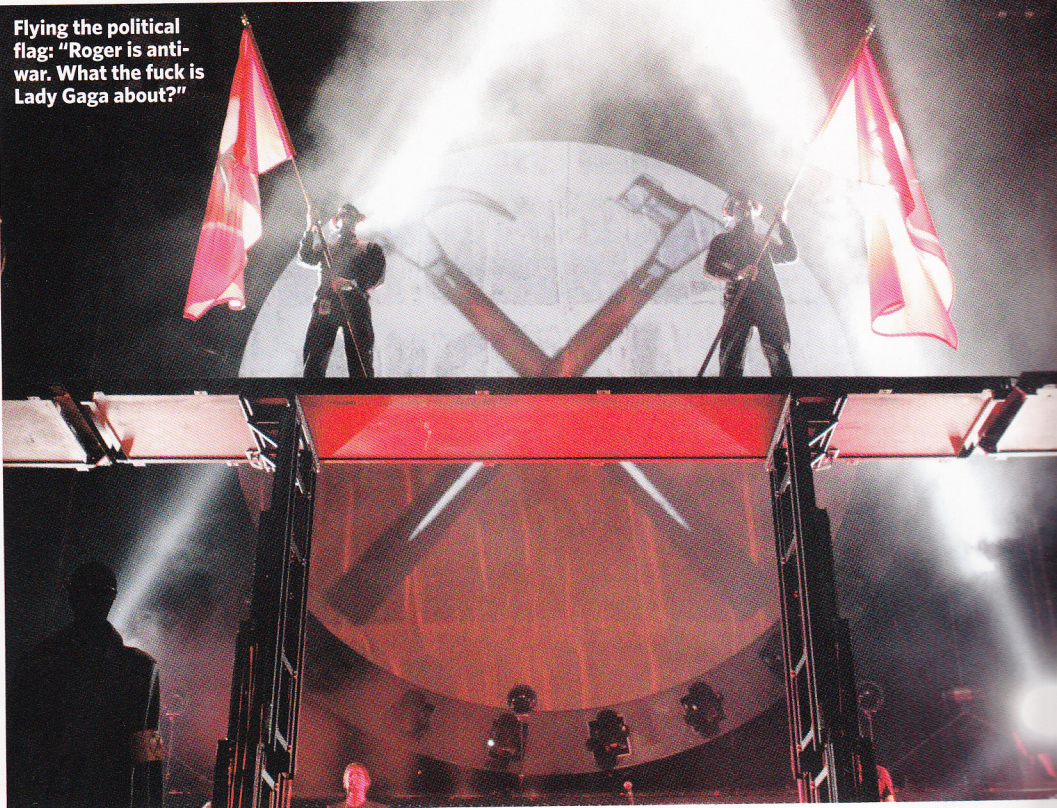
play *Careful With That Axe Eugene*. Afterwards Waters was so appalled by his behaviour that he sketched out the idea of a show with the band playing behind a wall to express his own feeling of alienation from the audience. He reminded the audience of the incident when the Wall tour reached Montreal's Bell Centre last October.

"When I wrote it, it was mainly about me, a little bit about Syd Barrett, but by and large it's about fear," he says. "It's about a frightened person. Fear makes you defensive, and when you're defensive you start building defences and that could be seen as a wall."

It has always been assumed that the original production of *The Wall*, which included a crashing Stuka dive bomber and giant inflatable puppets to reinforce Waters's bleak tale of alienation, paranoia, power and war was too complex to be toured. This is another thing that irks Mark Fisher.

"The only thing that stopped it being toured in 1980 was the cost," he says. "And it wasn't that the show was that expensive, it was that tickets were cheap. The top price ticket at Earls Court was £8. At the O2 in May people are paying £65 to £85.

Flying the political flag: "Roger is anti-war. What the fuck is Lady Gaga about?"



That completely changes the economics of putting a touring show together."

Fisher maintains that the ticket price reflects what the show is worth. "It allows you to spend a lot more on the hardware and the crew. We've spent the best part of \$15 million [£9.4 million] putting this show on the road. Back in 1980 we spent about \$2 million at most."

Tour director Andrew Zweck is another veteran of the original Wall shows. He confirms that this is the biggest show Waters has put together. "There are 24 trucks parked outside," he says backstage, with the air of someone who has spent decades keeping a close eye on the bigger picture. "There are 116 people on the road, which is more than double what we've had before. And that includes 14 carpenters who are just brick builders. The economics of it mean that we can now move the show overnight. The crew will be out of here by about three in the morning, and they'll start work again around six or seven."

While the wall itself has barely changed, other elements of the show have been greatly enhanced. The biggest advance has come with the projection. In 1980, three 35mm projectors struggled to beam Gerald Scarfe's inimitable animations onto the wall in focus and without too much overlap. Now there are 15 HD-quality projectors pointed at the wall, with a bit-mapping grid that means that as soon as a brick is positioned on the wall it immediately becomes part of the projection. It's a far cry from some of the early-80s shows that Mark Fisher remembers as "a mad race between the drug-crazed road crew and the band to see who could get to the intermission first".

As Video Content Director, Sean Evans is in charge of projections. A youthful-looking, heavily tattooed American, he grew up listening to *The Wall* ("I know it inside-out"). Evans, Waters and editor Andy Jennison spent weeks working on ideas for the projections in an editing room.

"It was like being back at art college," says Evans.

"Right from the start Roger said: 'I don't want to do this as it was. I have no interest in not making this political. We have to modernise it and we have to bring a message.'"

Waters says the new show has developed from the story of one frightened man hiding behind the wall, to a more expansive look at the way nations and ideologies are divided from each other. "We are controlled by the powers that be who tell us we need to guard against the evil ones who are over there and different from us and who we must be frightened of," he explains.

Part of the message included broadening the original album's references to encompass other wars and acts of violence since then.

"Roger put a notice on his website asking for people to send in pictures and details of family members, civilian or military, killed in wars or terrorist acts," says Evans. "We worked on it for months, and the first time I saw it with an audience even I welled up. During the intermission we put them all up on the wall. One night I saw a guy who'd obviously just seen a friend or relative on the wall, and he was just standing there sobbing."

The wider message of *The Wall* is clear from the outset when, instead of a 'surrogate' Pink Floyd taking the stage and fooling the audience (the opening gambit of the original show), the PA booms out the dialogue from Stanley Kubrick's *Spartacus* where the Romans try to coerce the slaves into revealing the rebel leader, only to be met by a growing chorus of "I am Spartacus". That's the cue for the heavy opening chords of *In The Flesh* as Waters



**Flying tonight:  
the Stuka crashes  
into the wall.**



walks on and dons the long leather coat that has materialised on the tailor's dummy. The song culminates in a bombast of old technology – lights, smoke, fireworks, and the dive-bombing plane crashing in flames – that softens you up for the barrage of images to come.

Gerald Scarfe's remade inflatable puppets make their mark. The sylph-like wife now has a ghastly green allure (and a startling pudenda for those who are startled by that kind of thing), while the mother now cuts more of a beady, surveillance character as she scans the audience, which is reinforced by an equally inquisitive CCTV on the circular screen. Only the teacher has failed to move with the times. He may have a new jacket but he's decidedly old-fashioned – it's been a long time since canes were routinely swished in the classroom.

Getting Scarfe's original animations to hold up against the new animations was another time-consuming task for Sean Evans and his team. "His stuff is legendary, you can't mess with it. Fortunately Roger had the original film, so we were able to restore it from the best possible source, but

it still took a lot of work to make it look good against the other stuff we were doing. Some of it, like the flower sequence, was actually made for the circular screen, so we extended the stems across the wall so it looked as if the flowers were coming from somewhere."

Some of Scarfe's other animations, such as the marching hammers, have been re-animated to fill the entire wall with a vivid brightness that borders on intimidating. Others, including the stems of the flowers, have been rendered in 3D. The projectors also make the whole edifice sway and buckle alarmingly. There are moments when you wonder if the animated trickery will upstage the climax of the show, when the wall comes crashing down.

"We've paced the effects so it all builds up to that point," says Evans. "We thought about whether to add any effects to the wall as it falls. But actually it

**"If  
you're in the  
first five rows it  
feels like the bricks  
are gonna hit you.  
I've been in the pit  
and gotten brained  
a couple of times."**

Sean Evans,  
video editor

looks pretty spectacular from wherever you are in the arena, with all the smoke billowing out and stuff. But if you're in the first five rows it feels like it's gonna hit you. I've been in the pit a couple of times with a camera and gotten brained a couple of times. Those things are heavier than they look."

Which is why, in these days of ludicrous litigation over the mildest inconvenience, a Health & Safety officer has been added to the tour payroll.

**B**ut what about the music? Waters's current band includes guitarists Snowy White, Dave Kilminster and GE Smith, drummer Graham Broad, keyboard player John Carin and, on piano and Hammond organ, Waters's son Harry.

Snowy White first played with Pink Floyd on their *Animals* tour in 1977, and he was part of the 'surrogate' band for the 1980 *Wall* shows. He has been a member of Waters's band since 1999. And he's happy to shed the non-committal *omerta* that hangs over most professional session musicians.

"This show is choreographed down to the second, because it wouldn't work otherwise," he explains. "The original was pretty tied down, too. People ask me if it's boring playing exactly the same thing every night. And I thought it would be, but really it's not. There's a lot to think about while you're on stage, and you're trying to get it that little bit sweeter every night."

It was White who found Dave Kilminster, who takes on the 'poisoned chalice' of replicating David Gilmour's epic guitar solo on *Comfortably Numb*. "Roger wants it just the way it is on record, and that's a young man's job," White says. "I'm happy to let Dave get up on top of the wall."

A large proportion of the Lisbon audience is surprisingly young ("They've been introduced to *The Wall* by their parents, who may in turn have been introduced to it by their parents," says White). It's something that makes the team behind it proud, although ultimately job satisfaction is almost as important as the cheque. Mark Fisher took particular pleasure in watching the US leg of *The Wall* running neck-and-neck with Lady Gaga in terms of revenue. "Roger is unambiguously about alienation, discrimination, anti-war. The audiences have been picking up on that. You'd be hard put to know what the fuck Lady Gaga is about."

In fact Waters's tour would eventually outstrip Gaga's in terms of the money it made. "We were second only to Bon Jovi, who were playing stadiums," says Andrew Zwick. "We were offered stadiums but Roger turned them down, even though it meant we needed to play another 16 dates in America to meet the business plan. That was fine by me, too."

**A**nother recurring theme among the technical and creative crews is Waters's continual attention to detail. Changes are still being made at the start of the European tour. Costumes have been altered, and the furniture in the hotel room that appears out of the wall in ➡

**Waters the  
dictator: "I milk  
it mercilessly,"  
he says**







## "THE IMAGES ARE OUT OF MY HEAD, NOT ROGER'S."

Legendary artist Gerald Scarfe on *The Wall*, then and now.

**GERALD SCARFE:** "Roger Waters came to me with the idea of *The Wall* and played his raw tapes to me. My job, really, was to illustrate his lyrics, but the images are out of my head, not his head. For example, when it came to the judge in the trial scene, I saw him as a huge arse, which I know Roger didn't. But he has this philosophy that is wonderful for artists, which is that if you employ an artist, you don't try to change what he does."

"For the inflatable puppets, I started with a drawing that I showed to Roger, and then I made a small sculpture about 10 to 12 inches high. Finally I painted it so

that the people who were making the big one had a guide.

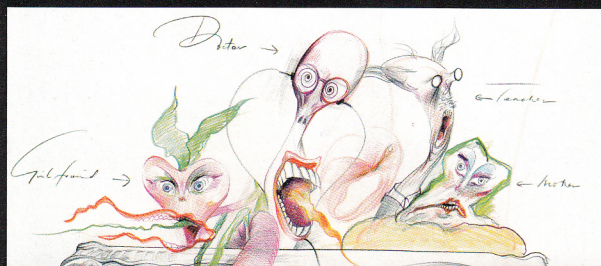
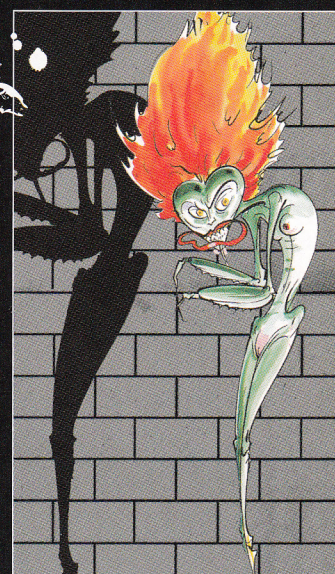
"I re-made the inflatables for the new show. I was never really satisfied with how they turned out originally. They were fairly unsophisticated, although people said they were pretty effective. They can now move around much better than before. The mother is more of a watchful figure, a kind of omnipresent force. She turns her head and rakes the audience with her searchlight eyes. The teacher is still the most popular character. There's always a huge roar when he comes on. In fact he's probably a teacher from back in my day. He's

still pretty skinny but that's because he's a mean bastard.

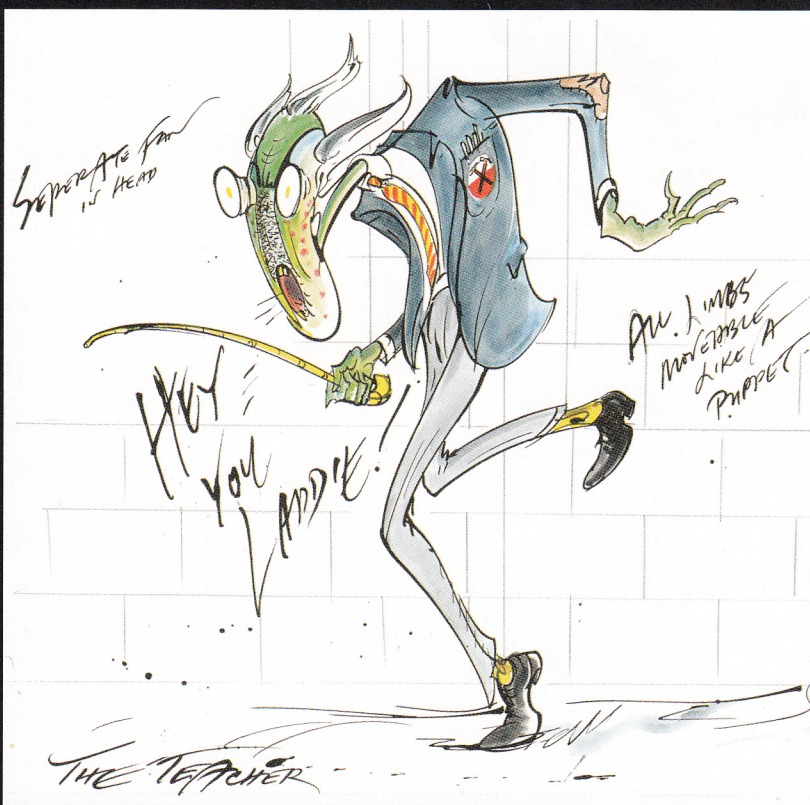
"I created a new animated character to illustrate *Waiting For The Worms*. He's crouching by the wall, and then he gets up and runs towards us, swiping at us as he runs. I also added some graffiti on the wall in what Roger calls my 'iconic' script.

"The new show has got tremendous oomph. Every minute of it is packed with something. Not necessarily something happening, but some sort of emotional feeling."

*The Making Of Pink Floyd's The Wall, by Gerald Scarfe, is out now.*



Scarfe's sketches for *The Wall* (clockwise from left) the new mother character, complete with notes; early drawing of the main characters; new drawings of the wife and the teacher. Below: Scarfe with Waters.



the second half of the show has been changed.

"That's Roger's trademark," says Zweck. "He's never satisfied. He wants to be involved in everything, every note, every image, the choreography. His fingerprints are all over *The Wall*."

They were all over the original show, and the album, for that matter. It's not as if Waters needed to reclaim *The Wall*, but the recognition after so long in the shadow of the band he quit must be gratifying. Mark Fisher can still remember the ignominy of Waters's *Radio KAOS* tour playing to less than 500 people at Wembley Arena in 1987, and the following year Pink Floyd packed out the stadium next door.

While the original *The Wall* album will always be associated with Pink Floyd, it's Waters who is clearly identified with the extraordinary success of the *Wall* tour. Significantly, he reasserts his authority over *Comfortably Numb* and *Run Like Hell*,

the two songs with which Pink Floyd climaxed their sets in the 80s and 90s. Indeed David Gilmour's appearance on top of the wall during *Comfortably Numb* was for many the high point of the original *Wall* production. But Waters sings the lyrics with real passion and despair, and, as the guitar solo comes in, smashes his hand against the wall, which shatters, sending a collective gasp through the audience. It's yet another gob-smacking moment.

And Waters turns the largely instrumental *Run Like Hell* into a dictator's rally with waving flags, strutting feet and crossed-fist salutes. By the end of the song it's difficult to believe that Waters didn't orchestrate the Libyan uprising as a publicity stunt for the tour.

Almost as startling is Waters's crowd-friendly demeanour, smiling, even making eye contact with fans down the front whenever he removes the long leather coat that he wears for his dictator's role in

the show. It's a far cry from the remote, uncommunicative figure he cut for so long, not least in the original *Wall* shows.

"I'm completely different, and feel completely different about being on stage now than I did then," he admits. "In the last 30 years I've come round to embracing the possibilities of that connection with the audience. Now I milk it mercilessly, just because it's fun and it feels good. Whereas back then I was so fearful that when I was on stage I was the same as I was at a party – standing in a corner, not looking at anybody, smoking cigarettes and more or less saying: 'Don't come anywhere near me.' Thank goodness I've grown up a bit since then. I like being on stage and enjoy the feeling of warmth – what's not to like?"

*Roger Waters's The Wall UK tour begins at London's O2 arena on May 11.*

Now turn over for Classic Rock's exclusive interview with Roger Waters...



# In The Flesh

All hail Roger Waters, the man who built – and then rebuilt – *The Wall*. In an exclusive interview, the bricklayer-in-chief reveals his hatred of governments, his personal training regime, and exactly what is happening with Pink Floyd.

Portraits: **Danny Clinch**

**T**hirty years on from the original *The Wall* tour with Pink Floyd, Roger Waters is a changed man. Floyd's 1979 album was Waters's reaction to the band's huge global success. Back then he was a distant and occasionally aloof figure.

In 2011 those barriers have dropped – the current *The Wall* shows find him making eye contact with the audience, occasionally even indulging in spontaneous banter. So warm and convivial is Waters feeling right now, there is even an open invitation for David Gilmour to test his vertigo atop the wall one more time and reprise his solo on *Comfortably Numb*. *Classic Rock* understands that Gilmour has the European tour schedule and is going to pick a show, although it's likely to be a last-minute arrangement. "Since I've worked through all kinds of personal problems I'm no longer as judgemental of myself or others as I used to be," Waters says. "I like being on stage and enjoy the feeling of warmth. What's not to like?"

**You wrote *The Wall* more than 30 years ago. Do you feel it's still culturally relevant today?**

When I decided to do *The Wall* again, I gave some thought as to what I could bring to it. I didn't want to go out and whine about how miserable I was when I was a young man, but you can see nations in the same way. They are subject to history in the same way an individual is, and they're subject to fears, particularly the citizens of certain nations, where fear is used as an exercise of control. The original story of 1979 could be seen as an allegory for a broader political situation that is very relevant and pertains to now.

**How have you brought it up to date for 2011?**

I hope that I've developed this show from just being about the story of one man who hides behind a wall because he's frightened, to being a more general piece about the way ideologies and nations are divided from one another. We're fearful of those beyond our borders and those who may seem to be different from what we are. We have three characters that are kind of graffiti on the wall: there's a Muslim girl, a Jewish kid and a Christian girl. And during the show I try to make the point that they have to be taught hatred. If you're a Jewish kid, you're not born believing that Palestinians are filthy pigs, or vice versa; if you're a Muslim kid in Iran, you're not born believing Israel should not exist and should be wiped off the earth; you're taught this stuff.

**How much of your traumatic childhood led to you writing the original *The Wall* album?**

Writing *The Wall* was a very important and

therapeutic process for me. Also, it was a very important part of making sense of my feelings. Not only the trauma of losing my father, but also trying to make sense of the fact that I felt alienated from other people. Music can be hugely therapeutic on all levels. Just making a noise can be a good thing.

**Your father died during WWII. It's been said that it was the only 'fair' war, because it was a fight against the Nazis.**


That is the only consolation in his death. There is no question that Adolf Hitler and the rest of the Nazi gang were a huge danger not just to the rest of Europe, but also to the whole world potentially and they had to be stopped. They were a real, real, danger, and I think it was absolutely necessary.

**People could say the same thing about Al-Qaeda or the Taliban.**

They could say it, but they would be wrong. It's a completely different situation. Take Iraq. Al-Qaeda did not exist in Iraq. Saddam Hussein, for better or for worse, ran a pretty tight ship in Iraq and there was no Al-Qaeda. Unlike Adolf Hitler, Saddam Hussein posed no threat to any of us. He may have posed a threat to the Kurds and the Iranians, but no threat to the French, English or anyone in North America. So the extraordinary amount of death and destruction that has been caused in Iraq under the leadership of George Bush and Tony Blair is meaningless beyond any disgust that I could manage to have.


**Your new production of *The Wall* is ambitious, even by your standards. Are there elements of the original 1980 show in this version?**

Yes there are. We're using revamped versions of the puppets that we used then, rebuilt, redesigned and used in a different way, but nevertheless... I'm working again with Gerry Scarfe and we're using some of the work that he did, both for the show back then and for the movie. Back then we had three rather old, rickety 35mm film projectors on rickety platforms stuck out in the audience. Now we can use video projection, and it means we can project across the whole 240 feet. There's a lot more words... a lot more languages. Fundamentally the music is the same and the lyrics are the same, so the thread of the narrative remains the same. Its



"Hey! You! Leave those bricks alone!" Waters and the new teacher puppet.



A photograph of David Gilmour, an older man with white hair and a beard, wearing a black t-shirt. He is sitting in a stadium with rows of purple seats visible in the background. To his left is a large white structure with a red light. To his right is a white brick wall. A red circle in the top right corner contains a quote.

**"I got my  
people to ask  
David Gilmour's  
people to ask him if  
he wanted to do this  
tour. He got his  
people to tell my  
people 'No'."**



terms of Catholicism, there's so much bad that goes with it that the good of that one thing could never outweigh all the bugging boys and stuff.

**You were a frightened young man when you wrote *The Wall*. Thirty years on we have *The War On Terror*, militant Islam, inequality in the world... Does all that frighten you?**

No. It disturbs me. But there's a difference. I feel more capable of engaging in political discussion, political action and political thought.

**Do you like life on the road?**

No, not really. It's a life I can tolerate. I enjoy doing the shows, but after that you have a glass of wine and go to bed. Because I have to sing every day I can't talk much. And I hate not being able to talk, particularly when we're on an aeroplane when there is a loud noise level, so you have to speak louder. Also, when you're at a party and lots of people are talking to each other... after an hour you lose your voice. And I can't afford to do that. That's something I don't enjoy.

**Do you find touring physically daunting?**

I'm 67 now, so I think there will come a point where

I won't want the physical demands – I can't imagine that at aged 80 I'm going to want to do 55-date tours. At the moment, I'm pretty fit and I have no qualms about doing this one. I have started to work out in preparation, as it is physically quite demanding.

**Are you very fit?**

I'm getting fitter. I started going to a personal trainer. I'd never been in a gym in my life, so it was a bit of a shock. It's unbelievably painful. I'm doing some cardio and a lot of strength and flexibility training to get stronger.

**There are rumours that this might well be your last tour.**

It might be, you never know. I tend to do quite big shows and I put a lot into it. Some people go out on tour until they die. Muddy Waters or BB King or some of those old blues players, they can just set up

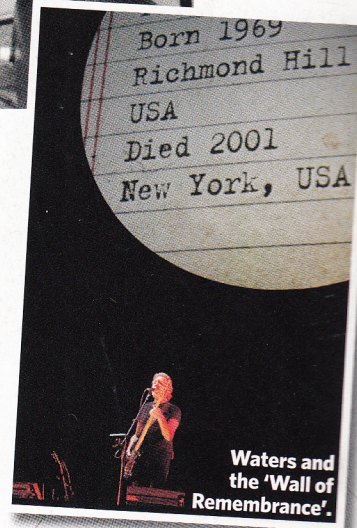
a chair and play and that's all they need to do. I feel that my shows have to be

a bit more physical. That might be harder to keep going. When I finish this tour I'll be nearly 70 years old, which is getting up there for a rock'n'roller.

**Did you ask David Gilmour or Nick Mason to do this current tour with you?**

Funnily enough, a guy called Hank Steinbrenner, whose father owned the New York Yankees, had an idea to put *The Wall* on in Yankee Stadium. He got in touch and said: "You ask Gilmour." I said I didn't mind asking, but that he'd say no. So I got my people to ask his people to ask him, and within about 20 minutes he got his people to speak to my people and said no. Which was totally predictable.

Waters and GE Smith discuss the pros and cons of playing *The Wall* live.



**"I do think about Syd Barrett. He burned brightly, but not for very long, sadly."**

**Is it just music from the original album, or is there extra music in there?**

It's actually a kind of extended version of the record, but only that there are three solos in *Brick II* instead of one, and that there's a longer bit after *Another Brick III* before *Goodbye Cruel World*. This allows time for the guys who are actually physically building the wall to complete their task. So it's a bit longer, but essentially the same.

**During the show there are projections of photographs of people who have died in conflicts – a Wall Of Remembrance. Don't you worry that anyone who has turned up to be entertained might feel uneasy?**

I've never been interested in making things just to entertain people. I want them to be moved and emotionally engaged. Otherwise I might just as well be working on a game show. I requested on my website that people send me photographs and stories about loved ones who have died in wars of any kind, as an act of remembrance. We become immured to actually how desperately disruptive these violent activities are. I try not to become immune to it... I try to be shocked and horrified by it every single day of my life, and I hope that will be expressed in this new version of *The Wall*.

**What are you trying to achieve with it?**

To go on my wall of remembrance you don't have to be a soldier, you can be a casualty of another kind. I'm going to be showing pictures of fallen loved ones, either soldiers or civilians killed in conflicts, and I very much hope that they come from everywhere. So there's a photograph of a US marine next to a picture of a resistance fighter born in Algeria who has gone to Iraq, as he sees it as an imperial invasion and wants to fight in what he perceives to be a holy war. The whole thing is very complicated, but I think it's important that I keep banging away at this very simple notion that there

is no 'us' or 'them', it's just accidents of geography.

**Can you still connect with the anger and alienation you felt back then?**

There's something in the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame museum that I've started to put in my programmes: that writing *The Wall* was part of a process to make sense of the feelings of alienation that I had. We never completely lose the fear of the dark that we experience as babies, so the anguish that is a natural part of the process of being human is something that is always there with all of us. But if we work on things we can make interesting and productive relationships with other living things that we experience as joy.

**Did you ever try psychotherapy?**

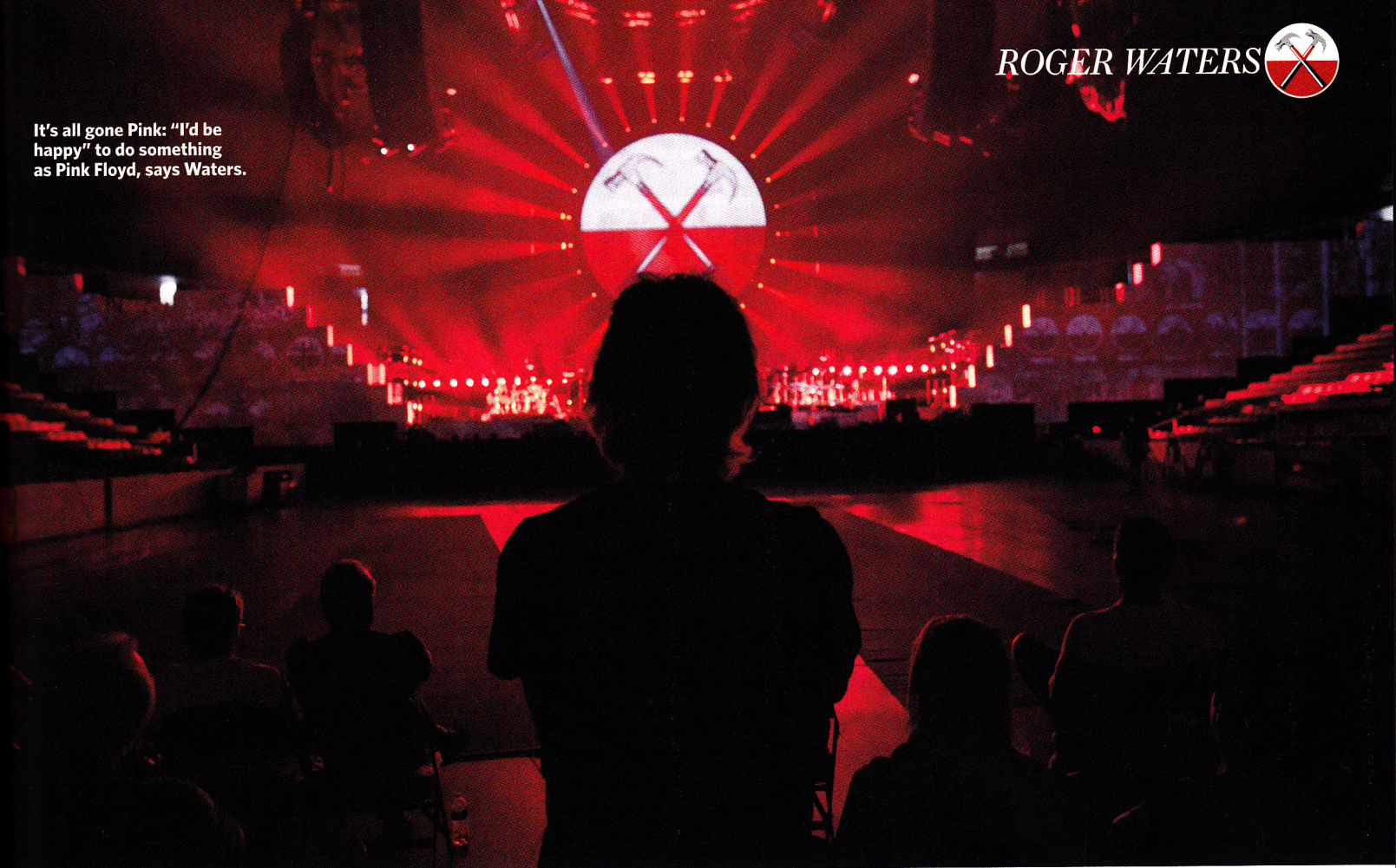
Did I? I did very little else for about 40 years! No, but I did quite a lot. I must have done 10 years or so once a week, maybe even 15 years.

**Did it help?**

I've no fucking idea! It sort of feels like a luxury... Well it is, it's expensive! But you would have to say that in a perfect world everybody could once a week go and see somebody who was interested in them, what they were feeling, their life, without the burden of friendship. It's great to have friends to chat to, but maybe the confessor is not so bad an idea. But in



It's all gone Pink: "I'd be happy" to do something as Pink Floyd, says Waters.



**You say you got your people to call David's people. Is it really that difficult to pick up the phone and call him yourself?**

I don't actually have his number any more. I could have just emailed him. It was slightly for a laugh – I just thought it was quite funny for my manager to call David's manager and have David's manager ask him, knowing what the answer would be anyway. I would have felt slightly embarrassed to ring him up and say: "Hey, Dave, do you want to come and play *The Wall* in Yankee Stadium?"

**After Live 8, it seemed like Pink Floyd could have re-formed. Why didn't it happen?**

David didn't want to do anything at all. Pink Floyd is David Gilmour and Nick Mason. The two of them own the name. I know that after Live 8, David definitely didn't want to do anything. And that's fine, it's okay, not a problem.

**People thought you'd buried the hatchet.**

We did. But that doesn't mean he would want to do a tour with me.

**Are you still in contact with David and Nick today?**

I was estranged for quite some time from Nick Mason after the schism in the band, but we're now very good friends again and I see him a lot. David and I were never really good friends and we're not good friends now, but we're not enemies. We have very little in common so don't see each other socially, but there is no enmity.

**Do you think the three surviving members will ever tour as Pink Floyd again?**

You should ask David that question. I'd be happy to do something. But I think it's extremely unlikely. I don't think David is even faintly interested in doing that.

**Do you feel sad about that?**

Well, it comes with lots of problems. Live 8 was okay. I called David because Geldof asked me to call him. I decided for Live 8 that if there were any problems at any point, I'd roll over. Which I did, so it was fine. I couldn't do a project or tour like that, I could only do it for a couple of days of rehearsals or a show. Also, I work with people who are very talented and have a lot of input, but at the end of the day I can say: 'No, we'll do it this way', or 'That's a great idea. We'll do that'. So there are no arguments. And I like living a life with no arguments. Problems, decisions, things to solve – I love all that, but no arguments.

**Are you nostalgic about Pink Floyd?**

Yes. Up until *Dark Side Of The Moon* we were very motivated and worked well as a team. After *Dark Side Of The Moon* there was a long period of fragmentation.

**Do miss the feeling of actually being in a band?**

No. Even early on there were lots of tensions, and I much prefer the buck stopping with me. I love contributions and conversations and always listen to what everybody has to say, but in the end I prefer to be in a situation where I can say: "That's a good idea, but we'll do it this way."

**Do you still think about Syd Barrett?**

I do think of him, yeah. I hadn't spoken to him for 30 years by his death. He didn't want contact with me or anybody from the band. He wanted to be left alone in Cambridge. He burned brightly, but not for very long, sadly. And I was always extremely sad that he

succumbed to the mental illness that he succumbed to. If there had been a way that he could have recovered from it, that would have been great, but as it turned out there wasn't. Illness is always sad.

**Would you say that *The Wall* is your favourite album you've done with Pink Floyd?**

Yes I would.


**Is it because it's more personal?**

Yes, and because of the way the narrative works and the shape of the thing and it's maybe the most accomplished technically and philosophically.

**Your classical album *Ca Ira* aside, it's now 18 years since your last solo album. Do you have any plans for a new one?**

An album? I've got so many songs, and I keep meaning to get round to organising it and making another one, but I never seem to do it. I don't know why. But I'm sure I shall eventually.

**Do you still have the opinion that music can change the world?**

I do. There's something about the mathematics of what we call music that affects something in our physiology and creates an emotional response that feels as if it causes a difference in one. I believe everything is connected. It's like a pebble in a pond: the change might be infinitesimal, but it is a change nevertheless and the ripples spread. I'm not expecting any new revolutions or for a new Dylan or Lennon to come along, but music changes all our lives every day. 

**"Did I try psychotherapy? Every day for 40 years! Did it work? I've no fucking idea!"**